



# COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY NEWS RELEASE

## GUILTY PLEAS SECURED ON CHILD MURDER CHARGES

**For Immediate Release – October 6, 2016**

The City of Salem Commonwealth's Attorney has secured guilty pleas against two adults who were responsible for the death of a four-year-old and injuries to a six-year-old who lived in the same home on Front Avenue.

On September 30, Antonio J. Lebron entered a guilty plea to one count of second degree murder, two counts of child abuse or neglect and two counts of child cruelty. He was sentenced to 50 years in the state penitentiary. His sentence will be suspended after he serves an active incarceration period of 23 years.

On October 5, Danielle Janine Burnett entered a guilty plea to one count of second degree murder and two counts of child abuse or neglect. She was sentenced to 30 years in the penitentiary. Her sentence will be suspended after she serves 12 years. These sentences are the result of Grand Jury indictments that were returned on December 11, 2015.

On September 24, 2015, the Salem Police Department, Salem Fire & EMS, and Roanoke County EMS responded to the 100 block of Front Avenue in reference to a call of an unresponsive child. Upon arrival, emergency responders located a four-year-old male and transported him to Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital with serious injuries to his torso and head.

Lebron, who lived at the home with the child's mother, told police that the child had fallen down some stairs earlier that day, but had seemed fine until he fell asleep later in the afternoon and failed to wake up when called for dinner. Burnett, the mother, claimed to have no knowledge of the child being injured because she had been at work all day. The child was treated with surgery and other measures, but died three days later on Sunday, September 27.

An autopsy revealed the cause of death as blunt force trauma to the head and torso, and the manner of death as homicide. A second male child, age six, who also lived in the home, was found to have multiple bruises and contusions over his legs and buttocks but did not require hospitalization. Subsequent investigation revealed that the children had injuries that had been the subject of a previous Child Protective Services investigation in Buffalo, New York, before moving to Salem.

**CONTACT:**

Thomas E. Bowers  
City of Salem  
Commonwealth's Attorney  
(540) 375-3041  
[tbowers@salemva.gov](mailto:tbowers@salemva.gov)